

Randy,

In response to Susan Kegley's email to you, specifically to the following:

ô4) Do a study that focuses in on schools that have been planted right in the middle of agricultural areas and monitor for a selection of pesticides used near each school. There are several affected schools in Ventura County and lots in the Central Valley. We could help you pinpoint them.

5) Look at methyl bromide and telone exposures in the Central Coast area to see what the effects of the new regs will be.

Community & Children's Advocates Against Pesticide Poisoning (CCAAPP) was formed in 1996 in response to an exposure of Methyl Bromide and Chloropicrin which drifted from an 88 acre strawberry field. Many of my neighbors, as well as my family were, exposed. We had symptoms that ranged from nausea, vomiting, headaches, body aches, puffy eyes, red faces, etc. Of course those were short term, the long term affects are still unknown.

The 88 acres are a minute part of our counties thousands of acres of strawberries. Unfortunately, many of these acres are placed next to schools. Approximately 41 of the 71 public schools in Ventura County are within + mile of agriculture, 17 of these are adjacent to agriculture. In Ventura it seems that very little has been done to protect the children attending these schools.

Personally I sat (as a non-voting member) on the Ag Futures Alliance sub-committee for Schools and Ag. The white paper that was produced had some ideas and guidelines for the interface of schools and ag, however I don't believe that many if any were ever actually implemented. There seems to be a lack of concern that there is any real threat to the health and well being of our children by our elected representatives, CA DPR, the county ag commissioner's office, agri-business and many community members. It is vital that the CA DPR seriously looks at the continued use of toxic pesticides next to or near our children and takes steps in protecting them. A study does no good if its findings and suggested changes are not implemented.

Both of Susan's ideas (#4 and #5) are very important. In fact most of the schools (mentioned above) are exposed to the usual pesticide cocktail which is put together for growing strawberries for agri-business. What if your agency supported and aggressively educated agri-business of the use of non-toxic alternatives and the transition to organic production.

Please feel free to contact me and keep Ventura County in mind as you are setting up the actions you will take on behalf of CA DPR.

Sincerely,

Lynda Uvari
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Susan Kegley <skegley@panna.org> wrote:Hi Randy,

Thanks for your note and your work on the DPR EJ project. Here are some ideas that may be useful.

I think it would really help people see the big picture if you were able to provide some additional information about pesticide use patterns. When we go to select a sampling site for our Drift Catcher projects, we first decide on a target pesticide (or several), then go to the PUR data and create a map of use of each pesticide by MTRS for each month. That way it's easy to see where the high-use areas are and at what time of year you'd be most likely to find these pesticides in air.

It would be good to have these maps (just annual use is good enough for an initial look) at the Nov. 8 workshop for several pesticides that have historically been of concern to Central Valley and Central Coast communities. Pesticides that specifically come to mind are metam sodium, chloropicrin, methyl bromide, telone, the OPs, and the cotton defoliants. There are certainly others of concern---I'll not try to speak for everyone, but these are certainly some to start with.

Once you have these use maps in hand, it will clarify where the most urgent priorities are for monitoring. From our own analysis of pesticide use data in the Central Valley, small towns like Earlimart, Lindsay, Huron, Poplar, Chowchilla, Lemoore, Delano, Porterville, Shafter, Buttonwillow, Lamont, Arvin, and Visalia really stand out as high-use areas. The

announcement about the Nov. 8 meeting was forwarded to people we know in those areas and I hope many will be able to attend. Fresno is a huge population center that is close to very high pesticide use, and there are people in Fresno interested in the DPR EJ project who may also attend.

I would also encourage you to consider including the highly-impacted Central Coast area for this project. In particular, pesticide use per capita is extraordinarily high in Ventura County, with population centers very close to fields and orchards. The Wishtoyo Foundation (Ricardo Melendez, ShadowDancer127@aol.com) and Children's and Community Advocates Against Pesticide Poisoning (Deborah Bechtel, secondpest@aol.com) are very interested in having monitoring done in their area.

You could also select a community for monitoring by where there is the most community demand and/or perceived health effects. Your study will be most useful if it can tie in to health effects and/or provide evidence that will promote policy changes to reduce exposures. I know you haven't seen much demand from communities yet, but I think this is because people haven't quite realized what DPR is doing on this project. The announcement for the first meeting was somewhat vague and I didn't even find out that you guys were thinking of doing an air monitoring project until Anne Katten let me know after talking with you the week before the meeting. None of the specifics were in the meeting announcement, so people weren't sure it would be worth their time to go. I know you're walking a tightrope here between trying to bring community members into the planning process early on and just presenting a finished plan to them, but I think you'll get better feedback if you have developed some options to present to folks--otherwise, it's just too amorphous and there's nothing there to build on. People don't know what DPR is capable of doing or what is possible within the constraints of time and budget. That's where we need your leadership and guidance.

Here are some specific project ideas that have come up in some of our discussions, some of which build on existing programs.

1) Many people complain about "defoliant flu" during cotton defoliation season in September and October. How about monitoring cotton defoliants in Fresno proper, with monitoring stations located in several areas around the city? Dr. David Pepper at the University Medical Center runs an asthma clinic there and has patient data that could be used to correlate concentrations of pesticides in air to office visits and ER visits for asthma. I think he might be willing to work with you on this. His e-mail address is drpepper@ucsfresno.edu.

2) Metam sodium/MITC and chloropicrin levels during application season in a high-use area in the southern Central Valley--possibly one of the exposed communities (Earlimart, Arvin, Lamont). Because of the unfortunate poisoning incidents, we know all too well what the symptoms of exposure are and it might be worth trying to work with health care providers in the area to track clinic and ER visits for respiratory problems and determine if there are any correlations. Teresa DeAnda, CPR's central valley organizer, has contacts in those communities, teresa@igc.org.

3) Monitor as many pesticides as possible that have been associated with birth defects or developmental disabilities in Fresno. Use the Prop 65 list as a starter, and don't forget to include methyl bromide. The Environmental Health Investigations Branch (EHIB) at DHS in Oakland is tracking incidence of these health effects in Fresno County and perhaps the DPR air monitoring data could contribute to determining if there are relationships between air concentrations of certain pesticides and observed outcomes. Eric Roberts is the PI on the EHIB project, ERobert1@dhs.ca.gov.

4) Do a study that focuses in on schools that have been planted right in the middle of agricultural areas and monitor for a selection of pesticides used near each school. There are several affected schools in Ventura County and lots in the Central Valley. We could help you pinpoint them.

5) Look at methyl bromide and telone exposures in the Central Coast area to see what the effects of the new regs will be.

6) Look at OPs in air during the dormant spray season in an area of high use. The Grayson Neighborhood Council in Grayson (near Westley) is very interested in this. John and Rosenda Mataka are good contacts here, rmataka@pc-intouch.com.

7) Forget monitoring and focus on enhanced enforcement. This is very much an EJ issue, when people call their local ag commissioner and can't get him or her to take their complaints seriously. We'd see this as an awareness-raising campaign for both growers and residents to let everyone know that drift is illegal and anyone who experiences it should report it. Billboards and newspaper ads could be placed with 'no drift' messages (we'd love to help you design them). DPR could work to place their Community Guide in a variety of convenient and easily accessible locations to get the word out. DPR could send letters to ag commissioners to ask them to ramp up investigation, enforcement and fines from drift violations. Instead of monitoring an area where there may or may not be a problem, use the monitoring resources in situations where people are complaining, which would mean local Ag Commissioners mobilizing the sampling equipment rapidly to catch drift while it is still a problem.

Others may have additional ideas--I've cc'd some people from the Valley and Central Coast on this note to involve them in this discussion, so I'm hoping people will reply with their ideas as well.

Finally, I think it is important to consider that a successful DPR EJ project should end up reducing pesticide impacts on disproportionately exposed populations. Any study should have that as its ultimate goal.

See you on the 8th.

Best,

Susan

At 4:58 PM -0700 10/29/04, Randy Segawa wrote:

You should have received some earlier emails regarding Cal/EPA's environmental justice action plan, including DPR's pilot project for air monitoring in the Central Valley (information attached). DPR has received few comments on its plan, particularly suggestions for which community we should monitor and which pesticides we should monitor for. I would appreciate any comments from you or your colleagues. Thanks

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